

Serial No. 10/673,260

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MAY 20 2008**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:****1. (currently amended) A disposable diaper, comprising:**

a diaper main body including a top sheet, a back sheet and an absorbent body disposed between said top sheet and back sheet;

a pair of side flaps respectively extending outwardly from respective side edge portions in a lateral direction of said diaper main body, the side flaps being disposed between said top sheet and back sheet, each of said side flaps comprising an elastic sheet sandwiched between upper and lower non-woven fabric layers;

a pair of fixing tapes each having a hook member and being attached to one of said side flaps in a vicinity disposed in proximity of an outermost lateral edge of each of the side flaps extending outwardly, and said side flap;

an engaging region provided on a surface of each said side flap where to engage the respective fixing tape is releasably engageable with said side flap through the hook member, wherein

said engaging region, defined by a non-woven fabric that has no adhesive on said surface, comprises (a) an engaging portion directly, mechanically and non-adhesively engageable with said hook member, and (b) a non-engaging portion with which said hook member can barely be engaged or cannot be engaged at all and which comprises a nonwoven fabric having a lower engaging force with said hook member than the engaging portion and a larger area that faces the hook member than the engaging portion;

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an entire area of said engaging portion is in a range of 5% to 50% of the entire area of said hook member;

said fixing tape comprises (i) a fixing tape substrate, [[and]] (ii) said hook member provided on a surface of said fixing tape substrate, and (iii) a gripping portion at one of opposite ends of the fixing tape substrate and adjacent to the hook member;

said fixing tape substrate comprises a nonwoven fabric having a lower engaging force with said hook member than the engaging portion; and

said engaging region defines non-engaging portion comprises a temporary fixing portion at which [[of]] said fixing tape is temporarily fixed to said surface of the side flap in a manner that most of the direct engagement between the engaging portion and the hook member is achieved by a portion of the hook member that is immediately adjacent the gripping portion.

2-3. (canceled)

4. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein the engaging force of said engaging region with said hook member is in a range of 0.3 N/25mm to 2.2 N/25mm.

5. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein said non-engaging portion has an engaging force with said hook member not greater than 2.2 N/25mm.

6-7. (canceled)

8. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein said hook member of said fixing tape is a male engaging piece of a hook-and-loop fastener.

9. (currently amended) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein said

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fixing tape is directly attached to [[a]] the surface of said side flap and is ~~foldable~~ folded along the outermost lateral edge of said side flap, ~~in such a manner so~~ that said hook member faces said surface of said side flap, ~~so as to be~~ and is temporarily fixed to said surface of said side flap in [[a]] the recited manner ~~where said hook member achieves engagement with said engaging region when said fixing tape is folded back.~~

10. (currently amended) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein said fixing tape is directly attached to said side flap, ~~so in such a manner~~ that said hook member opposes [[a]] the surface of said side flap, ~~so that said fixing tape~~ and is temporarily fixed to said surface of said side flap in [[a]] the recited manner ~~where said hook member achieves engagement with said engaging region.~~

11. (currently amended) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein said fixing tape is directly attached to one of opposite surfaces of said side flap and is ~~foldable~~ folded along the outermost lateral edge of said side flap, ~~so in such a manner~~ that said hook member faces the other one of said opposite surfaces of the side flap, ~~so as to be~~ and is temporarily fixed to said other surface of said side flap in [[a]] the recited manner ~~where said hook member achieves engagement with said engaging region after said fixing tape is folded back.~~

12-20. (canceled)

21. (currently amended) A disposable diaper, comprising:  
a diaper main body including a topsheet, a backsheet and an absorbent body disposed between said topsheet and backsheet ~~sheets~~;  
a pair of side flaps respectively extending outwardly from an end portion of said diaper main body in a lateral direction of said diaper main body; and  
a pair of fixing tapes each being attached to one of said side flaps in a vicinity of an

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outermost lateral edge of said side flap;

wherein

said fixing tape is provided with a hook member;

each said side flap and the respective fixing tape are engageable through the hook member;

an engaging region is provided on a surface of each said side flap where the hook member of the respective fixing tape is engageable for temporarily fixing said fixing tape to said side flap before use, said engaging region being defined by a non-woven fabric that has no adhesive on said surface and comprising

an engaging portion with which said hook member is directly, mechanically and non-adhesively engageable and which is located adjacent the end portion of said diaper main body; and

a non-engaging portion of a material which has either a low engaging force with said hook member or no engaging force at all with the hook member, wherein the non-engaging portion has a larger area that faces the hook member than the engaging portion and is located adjacent said engaging portion;

an entire area of said engaging portion is in a range of 5% to 50% of the entire area of said hook member;

said fixing tape comprises (i) a fixing tape substrate, [[and]] (ii) said hook member provided on a surface of said fixing tape substrate, and (iii) a gripping portion at one of opposite ends of the fixing tape substrate and adjacent to the hook member;

said fixing tape substrate comprises a nonwoven fabric having a lower engaging force with said hook member than the engaging portion; and

each said side flap comprises (a) an elastic sheet and (b) a non-woven fabric which is joined to the elastic sheet on a side adapted to face a wearer's body in use.

22. (canceled)

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23. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 21, wherein the engaging force of said engaging region with said hook member is in a range of 0.3 N/25mm to 2.2 N/25mm.

24. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 21, wherein said non-engaging portion has an engaging force with said hook member not greater than 2.2 N/25mm.

25. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 21, wherein said hook member of said fixing tape is a male engaging piece of a hook-and-loop fastener.

26. (currently amended) The disposable diaper according to claim 21, wherein said fixing tape is directly attached to an inner surface of said side flap and is ~~foldable~~ folded along the outermost lateral edge of said side flap, in such a manner that said hook member faces said inner surface of said side flap, so as to be temporarily fixed to said inner surface of said side flap in a manner where said hook member achieves engagement with said engaging region ~~when said fixing tape is folded back~~.

27. (currently amended) The disposable diaper according to claim 21, wherein said fixing tape is directly attached to said side flap in such a manner that said hook member opposes ~~the~~ the surface of said side flap, so that said fixing tape is temporarily fixed to said surface of said side flap in a manner where said hook member achieves engagement with said engaging region.

28. (currently amended) The disposable diaper according to claim 21, wherein said fixing tape is directly attached to an outer surface of said side flap and is ~~foldable~~ folded along the outermost lateral edge of said side flap, in such a manner that said hook member faces an opposite, inner surface of said side flap, so as to be temporarily fixed to said inner surface of said side flap in a manner where said hook member achieves engagement with said engaging region ~~after said fixing~~

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tape is folded back.

29. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 26, wherein said non-engaging portion of said engaging region is formed on at least one of said fixing tape and said inner surface of said side flap.

30. (previously presented) The disposable diaper according to claim 26, wherein said engaging portion in said engaging region is formed on said inner surface of said side flap.

31. (currently amended) The disposable diaper according to claim 26, wherein said fixing tape substrate is further provided with ~~a gripping portion at an end thereof and an attaching portion at the opposite end thereof~~, said attaching portion being directly attached to said inner surface of said side flap; and

said fixing tape is provided with an opening in said attaching portion, a portion of said inner surface of said side flap being exposed through said opening and directly mechanically, non-adhesively engageable with said hook member when said fixing tape is folded back.